

More Secrets About Beans

Beans meant a lot to me
being a kid disliking meat,
beans the favorite meal
my mother fixed, but my
father who'd grown up
in Texas Dust Bowl poverty
where a pot of beans
was ekeing out a living
as well as Sunday supper
loved meat, T-bones, thick
roasts, pork chops. Meat
on his plate meaning not just
luxury, deliciousness and
plenitude, but also, so he
thought, good health, so my
mother's once-a-week pot of
pintos and cornbread because
she craved them was always a
meatless bone of contention
between them. Beans still
mean a lot to me, a big pot
of them my favorite soup to
cook, especially on a cold
winter day when I'm all alone
and its steam fogs up the
windows, encasing me, making me
feel special and wrapped-up
as if I were a good-news secret
and I like how its bubbling
warmth actually speaks to me
and I understand
every word.

Joan Jobe Smith